

KIRAAT

The Samjik Mundhum and history states that the Kirat people are the original inhabitants of the Himalayan region. Even today, these communities primarily reside in the mountainous areas. The origin stories of the Kirats—including the Yakthung (Chong, Limbu, or Subba), Khambu or Rai, and other Kirat groups—are deeply intertwined with the Himalayan mountains, such as Mukkumlung, Menchhayayam, Siding kokma, Mount Kailash (Kae-Lasho), Phoktanglung (Kumbhakarna Mountain), and Mangenna Lungdhung (Place of Origin of the Ancestors), Tuwachong, Merungchong, Silichong, as well as other significant mountains and extensive caves throughout the Himalayas.

Kirat, according to the Samjik Mundhum and Hindu Scriptures:

The Samjik Mundhum refers to Sodhunggenlepmu Hang Mang as "Hangsam Theba" and associates him with the Himalayan Mountains. According to the Samjik Mundhum, the evolution of human civilization and the development of kinship occurred simultaneously. The text states that kinship developed in Ka-e Laso-netnaden, where "Ka-e" signifies kinship, and "Laso-netnaden" denotes a sacred place of worship. Thus, Ka-e Laso-netnaden refers to the sacred Himalayan location where the bond between brother and sister originated (p. 123, Samjik Mundhum).

According to Hindu scriptures, one of the manifestations of Shiva (Hangsam Theba or Lha Chen Wangchuk) was named KIRAT, which means "brave warrior" or "a person of high moral character," embodying qualities such as kindness, generosity, and purity. The Kirat are mentioned in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shiva Mahapurana, Swasthani Brata Katha, and other texts. Lord Shiva Mahadev (the Great God) is known as Kailaspati (Lord of Kailash) and is also called Kirateswor. The descendants of Kirateswor (Shiva) are called Kirat, and the religious practices followed by the Kirat people are known as the Kirat religion. (Ref. 514 and 515 of Bon Parba: Mahadev Shiva describes himself to Arjun, "I am the Lord of Kailash, and I am Kirat" (p. 95).

According to Hindu texts, including the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shiva Mahapurana, Swasthani Brata Katha, and Manusmriti, the Kirat people regard Lord Shiva Mahadev as Kailaspati (Lord of Kailash/Himalaya) and refer to him as Kirateswor. Consequently, the Kirat are devoted followers of Lord Shiva (Hangsam Theba or ལྷ་དབང་ལྷུག་) in accordance with their traditions and cultural beliefs.

Here are some references to Kirat in Hindu scriptures:

Rig Veda: Dr. Swami Prapannacharya states in his book Prachin Kirat Itihas(p.22) and the historian Janaklal Sharma states in his book Hamro Samaj, Ek Addyanan (p.315) that in Rig Veda Samber was the ruler of Himalaya region and he was Kirat.

Yajur Veda: The chapter-30.16 of Yajur Ved states, "Guhabya Kiratam" which means the handsome Himalayan Kirat people.

Atharva Veda: According to Atharva Ved (chapter 10.4.14) recites that Kirat used to cultivate medical herbs in the Himalayan region.

Ramayana: According to Ramayana (1.55.1-2) narrates, how the Kirata warriors was created by Sabala under the command of Vasistha, "From the pores of her skin originated the Mlecchas and the Haritas along with the Kirata" (p.141).

Mahabharata: Sava Parva (44-74) states that at the time of Mahabharata there were Kirat all around the Himalaya region and all over the world.

On verse 514 and 515 of Bon Parba, Mahadev Shiva describe himself to Arjun, "I am the Lord of mountain Kailash and I am Kirat" (p.95).

Sangsipta Shiva Purana: In the Sangsipta Shiva Purana (pp. 482-487), the narrative details the manifestation of Mahadev Shiva in the form of Kirat. When Mahadev Shiva approached Arjun in the guise of Kirat, Arjun did not recognize him. As a result, Arjun engaged in combat with Kirat. Ultimately, Arjun came to recognize Mahadev Shiva, who then granted him a boon before vanishing.

Monu Smriti – Sanatan Arya Dharma Grantha: The Monu Smriti (10.44) states that David, Komboj, Yavan, Parad, Pahalab, Chin, Kirata, Davad and Khas were Sudratwa.

Swasthani Vrata Kata : The Swasthani Vrata Katha (ch.14) narrates the manifestation of Mahadev Shiva and Parvati into Kirat (Kirat man) and Kirateni (Kirat woman) respectively.

Likewise, various ancient Sanskrit Vedas, Puranas, Shastras, and historical texts have provided different meanings and identities for Kirat. It is evident that since ancient times, the Kirat were dwellers of the Himalayan region. There are many references indicating that the Kirat were non-Aryan people with their own civilization, sacraments, culture, religion, history, script, language, and Mundhum.

The Limbu (Subba) and Khambu (Rai) are among the ancient Himalayan tribal groups recognized as Kirats, also known as Kiratis. They are a Sino-Tibetan ethno-linguistic group primarily residing in the eastern Himalayas. As indigenous ethnic communities of the Himalayas, their religious practices are guided by the Samjik Mundhum, which asserts the identity and traditions of the Kirat.